

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON LAND USE

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November 13, 2012
Start: 12:46 p.m.
Recess: 12:58 p.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room
City Hall

B E F O R E:
LEROY G. COMRIE, JR.
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Maria Del Carmen Arroyo
Charles Barron
Inez E. Dickens
Daniel R. Garodnick
Sara M. Gonzalez
Daniel J. Halloran III
Robert Jackson
Peter A. Koo
Jessica S. Lappin
Stephen T. Levin
Diana Reyna
Joel Rivera
James Vacca
Albert Vann
Mark S. Weprin
Jumaane D. Williams

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2 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE, JR.: I just
3 want to get everybody's attention and get the room
4 calm, so we can do these two quick meetings as
5 quickly as possible, since we're behind schedule.
6 We're ready to have the Land Use Committee meeting
7 for today, November 13th. We're joined by Council
8 Members Joel Rivera, Charles Barron, Peter Koo,
9 Sara Gonzalez, Diana Reyna, Maria del Carmen
10 Arroyo, Julissa Ferreras, Domenic Recchia, Jessica
11 Lappin, Al Vann, Jimmy Van Bramer, Darlene Mealy,
12 okay, Jumaane Williams, and Steve Levin, Dan
13 Garodnick, and Robert Jackson, what's the matter
14 with my ... and Cabrera. Geez, what's the matter
15 with me? Anyhow, we only have one item on the
16 calendar today, that's the Land Use #721, the
17 Civic Center plan in Manhattan Community Board #1,
18 item #C120267 PPM, it's an application submitted
19 by the New York City Department of Citywide
20 Administration to ... the disposition of two city-
21 owned properties, according to section 197-C of
22 the City Charter. The two properties are located
23 at 22 Reade Street and 49-51 Chambers Street,
24 pursuant to zoning. It is proposed that we
25 bifurcate this item into an A and B, with the A

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2 being a vote on 49-51 Chambers Street and B being
3 a vote on 22 Reade Street. I would recommend an
4 aye vote on A resolution to approve the sale of
5 49-51 Chambers Street, and an aye vote on the B
6 resolution to disapprove the sale of 22 Reade
7 Street. Does everyone understand what I'm saying?
8 We have to vote aye to disapprove the sale, aye.
9 I'm ... so we're taking a single vote, the aye vote
10 will mean that you are approving 49-51 and that
11 you're disapproving the sale of 22 Reade Street.
12 Any questions on the matter before the Committee
13 today? We're joined by Gale Brewer. I would
14 recommend an aye vote on this item. I want to
15 thank Council Members Williams and Barron, and
16 Council Member Chin, for their actions in this
17 matter, and thank the Land Use Committee staff and
18 Chair Levin for everything that he had to do to
19 try to get this resolved to the Council's
20 satisfaction. I won't go into any details on
21 this, since it has already been vetted in
22 subcommittee, any questions, any comments on this
23 item? With that I would recommend ... oh, the clerk
24 is not here? Is the clerk here? Okay, Amy, then
25 you can call the roll. Aye on ... I would recommend

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an aye vote, Amy can call the names.

COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Chair
Comrie.

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE, JR.: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
Member Rivera.

COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
Member Reyna.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
Member Barron.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: May I be
excused to explain my vote? First I want to thank
Chair Levin and Council Member Chin and Council
Member Williams for supporting us in having the
disapproval of 22 Reade Street. That comes with
some history around the African burial grounds, a
long time ago, you know, many of you may know
already that 427 remains of African people in that
area that we stopped them from building on around
Reade Street, and around the whole City Hall area,
there's like 20,000 of remains of Africans who
were enslaved and built New York City. That Reade

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2 Street property was a part of negotiations about a
3 decade ago, and resolutions that are in Congress
4 now, legislation pending, to turn it into a
5 national and international museum. And so this is
6 why we wanted to have that property not sold for
7 other reasons, and honor those who died, spilled
8 their blood, to build this city and indeed this
9 country, and so I want to thank my colleagues once
10 again, Margaret Chin, for working with me on this
11 one, and also for Council Member Levin and Council
12 Member Williams, and I vote aye on all.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
14 Member Jackson.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Mr.
16 Chairman, may I be excused to explain my vote?
17 Thank you. So while I vote yes on both items,
18 knowing that 22 Reade Street, as Council Member
19 Barron indicated, is an extremely important piece
20 of property to not on the African-American
21 community, but to many, many people who understand
22 the situation that this country was, you know, all
23 of the slaves that were involved in building Wall
24 Street and other areas, that clearly as a symbol
25 of a museum for the African-American burial

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2 ground, and tourists coming to our great city to
3 see the history of our city, that's very, very
4 important. So I co-chair the New York City
5 Council's Black, Latino and Asian Caucus, and
6 there's 26 current members of the caucus, and the
7 executive committee fully supports bifurcating
8 this property and not selling off 22 Reade Street,
9 in order for it to move forward towards being what
10 it's supposed to be, is a museum for the African-
11 American burial ground. So I vote yes on both
12 items, thank you.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
14 Member Vann.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
17 Member Gonzalez.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
20 Member Arroyo.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
23 Member Dickens.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Thank you,
25 Mr. Chair. I too join in with Council Member

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2 Barron in thanking Chair Levin first, and then
3 Chair Leroy Comrie, and Council Member Chin, and I
4 do thank Council Member Barron for bringing this
5 to all of our attention. This is very important,
6 this is historic, and this was a fight that went
7 on many years ago in order to preserve the legacy
8 and the history that African-Americans, Africans
9 and Blacks did in the building of this city and
10 this country. And I vote aye.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
12 Member Garodnick.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
15 Member Lappin.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Aye.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
18 Member Koo.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
21 Member Levin.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
24 Member Weprin.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Aye.

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2 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
3 Member Williams.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: May I be
5 excused to explain my vote? Thank you. I also
6 want to join in thanking Council Member Barron for
7 bringing it to everyone's attention, Council
8 Member Chin, Chair Levin and Chair Comrie for
9 working so hard. I'm proud to sit here to see
10 that we can actually bring something so important,
11 even though it was a late date, and have it
12 addressed. As I mentioned when I was here too
13 often I feel like the history of those of African
14 descent gets ignored and literally gets trampled
15 over. As I recall, when those African burial
16 grounds were found years ago, the city had to be
17 forced just to stop building and show some
18 respect, and I felt like that's what was being
19 done again. I actually have a bill with my
20 colleague Van Bramer to put a marker on Wall
21 Street for open-air slave trades, open-market
22 slave trades that happened over there. This is a
23 history that for some reason doesn't get the
24 attention that it deserves, and whenever it's
25 brought up it should be pushed aside as if it

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2 should be forgotten. I represent a district where
3 the streets are named after people who owned
4 people who looked like me, and so I'm glad this is
5 getting some of the attention it deserves, and I'm
6 proud to vote aye. Thank you.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Council
8 Member Halloran.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN III: Aye.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: By a vote
11 of 16 in the affirmative, zero in the negative,
12 Land Use Item #721 parts A and B is approved.

13 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE, JR.: We're
14 going to hold the vote open for a couple of
15 minutes for some members that are coming, or
16 walking their way back. This meeting is hereby
17 adjourned, I just want to say also again to thank
18 Council Member Chin, there are a lot of Land Use
19 items coming before her, and she's been really
20 working hard to make sure that members are
21 informed. I also want to say that when members
22 are not informed about all aspects of a project,
23 you have problems. And this is what happened
24 today, members were not informed about all of the
25 aspects of this, and we are not happy with the

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2 administration in how they responded to this whole
3 issue. With that I would remind Committee members
4 the next date is September ... September? November
5 28th, and the Subcommittee meetings will be held.
6 Please check your calendars for the dates for the
7 Subcommittee meetings, they'll be held starting on
8 the 26th. With that the meeting is adjourned, but
9 we will be holding the roll open for some members
10 to come over. Thank you. Wait, hold it, hold it.
11 We've got Council Member Vacca is here.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I vote aye.

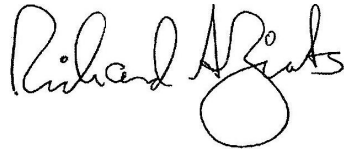
13 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE, JR.: I didn't
14 say adjourned. All right, okay, great. That's
15 it. Thank you.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK LEVITAN: Finance
17 will start immediately, everyone please find your
18 seats.

19 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE, JR.: I have to
20 close the Land Use meeting for November 13th, 2012.
21 It's hereby closed.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Richard A. Ziats, certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.



Signature _____

Date November 15, 2012